

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION
REPORT ON SECRETARY POSITIONS
IN WASHINGTON OFFICE

The Civil Service Commission conducted a Personnel Management Evaluation of the Washington Office from March 28 through April 13, 1977. As a part of that Evaluation, the Commission audited 18 positions that are classified as Secretary in the GS-318 series. The results of those audits, and the corrective action required, has been furnished to the Forest Service. The results are described below.

BACKGROUND

The Commission conducted on-site desk audits with 18 secretaries and their immediate supervisors. These audits represent about 10% of the 177 secretary positions in the Washington Office. The secretary positions audited represented all organizational levels from Deputy Chief through Section Leader.

FINDINGS

- Nine secretary positions were overgraded. (50%)
- Five positions were titled incorrectly. (28%)
- Sixteen positions were inadequately described. (90%)

* CORRECTIVE ACTION

1. Desk audit all 177 secretary positions in the Washington Office, minus those positions audited by the Commission, within 120 days of the final report.
2. Develop a plan with the Civil Service Commission to correct the classification. The corrective action will take place over a period of one year after the 100% desk audits have been certified by the Commission.

FOREST SERVICE PLAN

1. Prepare desk audit evaluation format to insure uniformity in classification procedure. (Jul 5-8)
2. Desk audit four positions to test format and procedures. (Jul 11-15)
3. Desk audit all secretary positions and prepare individual evaluation statements which must be sent to the Commission. (Jul 20-Sep 30)
4. Prepare report to the Civil Service Commission. (Oct 1-31)

5. Initiate action plan in accordance with the Federal Personnel Manual for those positions found to be classified at a lower grade level. (Nov 1-11)

a. Determine if additional secretarial duties can be assigned which will support the grade of the incumbent.

b. Determine if training is needed to enable the secretary to perform at the current grade level. (This is only when the person is performing below the classified grade level).

c. Determine if managers/supervisors are effectively utilizing the assigned secretary. (May require acquainting supervisors with the full duties and responsibilities of a secretary).

d. Develop a list of secretaries whose position are identified for downgrade.

6. Initiate action to downgrade all secretary positions, with incumbent secretaries, with pay retention for two years. (Nov 1978)

No secretary, or any other position in the Forest Service, will be downgraded until all other avenues have been exhausted. This is why the Civil Service Commission is giving us the one-year to correct overgraded positions. The avenues mentioned above are the four items outlined in number 5 above. If a person is involuntarily downgraded due to a change in classification, the person has certain rights. We are not going into detail on those rights at this time because the actions, if any are taken, are more than a year away. There are bills before Congress at this time which, if passed, could make downgrading unnecessary until a position becomes vacant. The rights will be explained when, and if, the need arises.

If you have any questions please call Jackie Garrison or Bob Long at 235-1691 or come to Room 801 in Rosslyn.

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Staff Unit: _____ Group: _____

Section: _____

1. Who is your supervisor? _____
(Name, Title, Series and Grade)
2. Do you receive visitors and telephone callers for your supervisor? _____
3. Do you ascertain the nature of the call or visit? _____
4. Do you attempt to answer any questions for caller or visitor? _____
5. What type of question? _____
Technical? _____ Procedural? _____
Policy? _____
6. Provide a brief, but specific example.

7. Do you refer phone callers and visitors? _____
8. If so, how do you refer the call or visitor? _____
Based on the information he/she desires or to who ever is in the office
at that particular time? _____
9. Do you maintain your supervisor's calendar? _____
10. Do you exercise authority in setting up appointments for your supervisor
when he/she is not in the office or without getting his/her approval? _____
11. Do you exercise authority shifting or tactfully refusing appointments? _____
12. Do you accept speaking engagements or invitations to meetings for your
supervisor? _____
13. Do you make arrangements for conferences? _____
14. Do you attend these conferences? _____
15. If so, for what purpose? _____
16. Are you involved in any other way in your supervisor's public contact
work? _____
17. If so, how? _____

18. Provide a list of people you often contact or who are often contacting
you concerning your supervisor's program(s). Also provide frequency
and purpose. (For example: Mr. J. Dryden, Administrative Service, at
least once a week to rearrange furniture; Biweekly contact with the
Raid, Inc. to check on the availability of research reports, etc.)

19. Do you receive incoming mail for your supervisor? _____
20. Do you open, read and screen and route the mail? _____
21. Do you personally handle any responses to incoming correspondence? _____
If so, give brief, but specific example.
22. Do you alert your supervisor or other staff members of any reply due dates? _____
23. If so, do you follow up to assure the reply is completed? _____
24. Do you review outgoing correspondence for accuracy? _____
25. Do you sign correspondence for your supervisor? _____
26. Do you maintain your supervisor's files? _____
27. Do you establish and revise those files as instructed by your supervisor, or as you feel necessary? _____
28. Do you assemble and summarize material from the files for your supervisor? _____
29. Do you procure or requisition supplies? _____ Major items and equipment or general office supplies? _____
Based on need, or as instructed? _____
30. Do you make travel arrangements for your supervisor? _____
If so, give brief, but specific examples of the types of trips he/she makes and what you are required to do.

How Often?

31. Do you make any arrangements for detailers? _____
32. If so, what do you do? _____

33. Do you obtain information outside the office for your supervisor, based on instructions as to the type of information desired? _____
34. If so, how and what type do you gather? _____

35. Do you supervise any other clerical employees in the unit? _____
Who? _____
36. Do you assist in interviewing and selecting other clerical employees in the Unit? _____
37. Do you receive and review publications, bringing important articles to the attention of your supervisor? _____
38. Do you devise or develop any office procedures in your unit? _____
If so, give example.

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39. Do you relay any instructions from your supervisor to his/her subordinates?
_____ If so, give an example.
40. Do you attempt to resolve office emergencies? _____
41. If so, give brief, specific example of the type of emergency and
how you handle it.
42. Do you utilize:
- | | |
|-------|---|
| _____ | Dictating Machine Transcription Equipment |
| _____ | Shorthand |
| _____ | Typing |
43. What percentage of time? _____
44. Do you provide secretarial duties for anyone else in the unit? _____
45. What percentage of time? _____
46. List other assignments you spend a substantial (1% of your time or
more) amount of time doing.

Attach any additional information you feel is necessary in order to audit,
evaluate and determine the grade level of your position.

I hereby certify that the answers provided to these questions are accurate and reflect true responsibilities assigned to the position.

Secretary's Signature

Supervisor's (or acting) Acknowledgement

Questionnaire for Secretaries' Supervisors

NAME _____

TITLE _____

DEPUTY AREA _____ STAFF UNIT _____

GROUP _____ SECTION _____

1. Who is your secretary? _____
2. Briefly, but specifically, describe your functional area or program. _____
3. Is your position description accurate? _____
4. Do you have any subordinates? _____
5. How many? _____
6. What kind (professional, clerical, etc.)? _____
7. Are they subdivided into groups? _____
How many groups? _____
8. Are the subdivided groups further divided? _____
9. Have you developed and initiated any formal office procedures to be followed by your secretary or unit? _____ If so, please attach a copy to this questionnaire.
10. If not, have you initiated an informal system of procedures? _____
11. Have you initiated formal progress reporting system within your unit? _____
12. How much and what kind of direction do you provide to the field? _____
13. Specifically, what contacts do you initiate or maintain to carry out the functions of your unit? What is the purpose and frequency of these contacts? (For example: Contacts the Director, Timber Management to discuss timber research activities in Region 2 approximately 5 times a week.)
14. What role does your secretary play in these contacts (For example: contacts Timber Management's staff secretary to provide a written report on timber research.)
15. As a whole, what is the percentage of time you spend in public contact work, within the FS? _____ Outside? _____
16. Which of the following more closely describes your unit and work situation? (check applicable answers)

____ Highly scientific

____ Technical

____ Administrative

____ Other (specify)

____ Significant amount of time spent with other within FS.

____ Significantly interlocked with group

____ Difficulty in coordinating own subordinates or groups

____ Rigid time constraints

____ Large number of crisis situations (unplanned)

____ Frequent conferences, meetings, etc.

____ within FS

____ Frequent conferences, etc. outside FS

____ Political impacts on the program is great


____ Impact from the general public is great

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I hereby certify that the answers provided are accurate and reflect true responsibilities assigned to my position.

signature

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